

BATES SWITCH PEPS WYCOMBE

Wycombe W 2 Erith & B 1

AMATEUR international Paul Bates was the architect of Wycombe Wanderers' narrow victory over their Corinthian League rivals Erith and Belvedere in a lively F.A. Amateur Cup clash before a crowd of 4,000 at High Wycombe.

Playing at inside left, instead of his normal position at centre forward, Bates provided the pass which enabled Holmes to equalise in the 34th minute after centre forward Johnson had given Erith a shock lead after 15 minutes.

And he finally claimed the winner five minutes before the end from a Holmes pass, after the die-hard Erith defence had defied all Wycombe could hurl against them throughout the second half.

Without skipper Len Worley, the Wycombe attack lacked finesse and depended largely on the shrewd generalship of Bates, though Tony Horseman made a success of his experimental switch to the left wing.

Erith, forced on the defensive for long periods, owed much to their sturdy defence where centre-half Hurlock repeatedly checked threatening Wycombe advances with his keen anticipation. Coombes and Crawford also covered well.

Their forwards lacked the constructive support which Wycombe enjoyed

Bates Goal Saves Off-Form Wycombe

By "NOVA"

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Erith and Belvedere 1

UNENTERPRISING in attack and often uncertain in defence, off-form Wycombe Wanderers must rank their 2-1 victory over the Corinthian League side Erith and Belvedere among their luckier passages into the Amateur Cup second round.

Go-ahead Erith frequently worried the unusually nervous Wycombe defence with swift passing movements, while their defence's quick tackling and close marking stopped most of the Wanderers' attacks before they could really develop.

It was left largely to Paul Bates and Tony Horseman in attack, and to goalkeeper Ken Brown and left-back Alistair Lewis in defence, to salvage the game for the home side. Only these four played up to their normal form.

For the first quarter-of-an-hour it seemed as if Wycombe would have no trouble in beating their opponents, for they built up their attacks smoothly and went close on several occasions.

But then came a dramatic turn-about. When the ball bounced in the Wanderers' penalty area Fisher missed when he jumped to head clear and before he could turn around the fast Erith leader Johnson ran in to smack the ball past the outstretched figure of Brown.

And when Erith turned on the heat Wycombe's defence was unable to master their clever man-to-man passing. John Fisher found it tough going against Johnson and Dave Thomas and Charlie Gale were unable to link up with their forwards.

EQUALISER

But for all their persistency Erith were unable to score again and after 35 minutes Wycombe drew level when Bates put across

to score—with a shot which was really a miskick.

After half-time Bates and Horseman both went close, but these efforts were purely individual and there was still a complete lack of teamwork.

The final whistle was only five minutes away, and a replay looked certain, when Bates latched on to a pass from Holmes, stretched his long legs and galloped past the tiring defenders to ram home a brilliant goal to give Wycombe a rather undeserved victory.

LACK OF COHESION

Wycombe's lack of cohesion, I felt, stemmed from the fact that both Thomas and Gale had a poor game.

John Beck played stubbornly under the handicap of a bout of 'flu' but never achieved his usual high standard. But on the other flank Alistair Lewis played a fine game and effectively subdued the fast Erith winger.

Tony Horseman produced some electrifying runs and certainly showed more determination than most of the other forwards.

The gamble on Tommy Holmes could hardly rank as a success. His passing was erratic as his marksmanship.

Peter James did not see much of the ball but when he did he was always willing to try something constructive and his shooting was always a worry to the Erith goalkeeper.